

**URBAN POLITICS IN THE POST-INDUSTRIAL ERA:
HAMILTON AND DETROIT
POLSCI 4UP3
Winter 2022, Term 2**

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Course Description

This course examines the changing social, political, and economic landscapes in the “post-industrial” era, using Hamilton, Ontario and Detroit, Michigan as case studies. Drawing on multidisciplinary perspectives and critical inquiry, this course will provide an understanding of the causes and consequences of changing cities. We will examine historical foundations, government policy, the perspectives of diverse urban residents, and the role of art and culture in reshaping post-industrial urban landscapes. This course will challenge you to go beyond traditional classroom pedagogy by engaging in local observation, recognizing patterns, seeing the manifestation of theory, and learning from the vibrant and dynamic urban landscape around us. The goal of this course is to increase your knowledge of the structure of local government, theories of urban politics, and critical readings of urban spaces, all while building your capacity to participate in the social and political life of your community as active and engaged residents.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course students should be able to:

- Understand and explain the major theoretical approaches to studying urban politics;
- Draw on multidisciplinary methods to critically examine the urban environment and how it connects to larger political, social, and economic changes;
- Understand specific issues in local government and politics in Hamilton and Detroit;
- Develop a unique project report tailored to securing funding for a social or physical intervention in the urban landscape to address said issues; and
- Critically reflect on a specific issue in Hamilton and/or Detroit through a thoughtful, research-based academic analysis.

Required Materials and Texts

- All required materials will be posted on Avenue to Learn and/or will be available online through McMaster Libraries.

Class Format

This class will meet once per week. Class time will involve some lecture but will focus heavily on dialogue and discussion of readings and concepts. Where possible, we will also host guest speakers with knowledge of specific topics. As an upper-year class, our focus will be on demonstrating critical thinking skills and a commitment to inquiry using a variety of methods.

Given the nature of international travel during the COVID-19 Pandemic, the 3-day field trip to Detroit that occurred in the past cannot go forward this year. Instead, we will engage with local media and conduct “virtual site visits” where applicable.

Course Evaluation – Overview

1. Regular class participation: 20%
2. Project Report: 25%
3. Field Report: 15%
4. Final Essay: 40%

Course Evaluation – Details

Regular class participation (Ongoing – in class): 20%

Participation involves attending seminars regularly and actively contributing to the discussion by highlighting a relevant news story, providing comments on the readings/theories raised in class, and/or engaging in a respectful way with the general discussion during the class.

Project Report (February 18 – electronic): 25%

This assignment will ask you to write a short project report on a specific issue in Hamilton or Detroit. This project report will ask you to develop a proposal, an initiative, or a policy-intervention in **5 to 7 pages**. This report will not be structured like an essay, but will include:

1. A name for the project and an abstract.
2. A summary of the problem being addressed. Here, you should tie the problem to the course by referencing readings and concepts we discuss. You should include a minimum of two course readings and a minimum of five outside readings.
3. A description of the target audience. This could be municipal leaders, a community foundation, a university, a government agency, or a private philanthropy.
4. A budget, a timeline, and a plan for implementation.

Field Report (March 1 – in class): 15%

This assignment asks you to be creative and consider the post-industrial city as it exists around us. You are tasked with venturing out into Hamilton (and virtually into Detroit) to view the urban landscape and see the physical manifestation of the theories and policies we will discuss throughout the term. Take photos/video of neighbourhoods/specific areas that address one of the readings set for this term. On March 1, you will be asked to give a **3 to 5 minute** presentation about the site and your experiences there, tying what you saw to the reading and the class overall.

Final Essay (April 12 – electronic): 40%

The final assignment for this class is a formal essay examining an issue in post-industrial cities (these could be, but are not limited to housing, urban politics, gentrification,

environmental concerns, grassroots activism, or could be specific to the case-study cities, such as LRT, neighbourhood change/depopulation, the role of the arts, or waterfront concerns). The essay will use a minimum of **10 sources** (*no more than three* can come from the course readings unless an exception is made) and will draw on academic work and popular media stories. This essay will be between **7 and 12 pages**.

Weekly Course Schedule and Required Readings

Week 1 – January 11

Introductions + How to study the city

Taylor, Zack & Gabriel Eidelman (2010). "Canadian Political Science and the City: A Limited Engagement." *Canadian Journal of Political Science / Revue Canadienne De Science Politique* 43(4), pgs. 961 – 981.

Week 2 – January 18

The theory and reality of post-industrialism

Bell, Daniel (1973). *Selections from "Introduction" to The Coming of Post-Industrial Society*. New York: Basic Books, pgs. 3 – 40.

Liagouras, George. 2002. "The political economy of post-industrial capitalism." *Thesis Eleven* 81(1), pgs. 20 – 35.

Week 3 – January 25

Up to now: Hamilton

Dale, Stephen (2021). "Chapter 1: Tectonic Shift" in *Shift Change: Scenes from a Post-Industrial Revolution*. Toronto: Between the Lines Books, pgs. 1 – 23.

Campbell, Marjorie (1966). "Chapter 24: Labour, Lawrence, and a Look-back" and "Chapter 25: The Jacksonian Era" in *A Mountain and a City: The Story of Hamilton*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, pgs. 244 – 269.

Week 4 – February 1

Up to now: Detroit

Kinney, Rebecca J. (2016). "Introduction" in *Beautiful wasteland: the rise of Detroit as America's postindustrial frontier*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, pgs. vii – xxviii.

Sugrue, Thomas (1996). "Chapter 7: Class, Status, and Residence: The Changing Geography of Black Detroit" and "Conclusion" in *Origins of the urban crisis: race and inequality in postwar Detroit*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, pgs. 181 – 208 & 259 – 271.

Week 5 – February 8

Urban politics and governance

McGreal, Ryan (2020). "Train Drain: Inside the Seemingly Endless Campaign to Bring Light Rail Transit to Hamilton" in *Reclaiming Hamilton* ed. Weinberg, Paul. Hamilton: James Street North Books, pgs. 275 – 308.

Gallagher, John (2015). "Chapter 7 – Democracy vs. Efficiency in Detroit," in *Reinventing Detroit: The Politics of Possibility* eds. Smith, Michael Peter & L. Owen Kirkpatrick. New York: Routledge, pgs. 113 – 121.

Week 6 – February 15

Race and Migration

Wayland, Sarah V. (2020). "City of Immigration: Inclusion and Exclusion" in *Reclaiming Hamilton* ed. Weinberg, Paul. Hamilton: James Street North Books, pgs. 83 – 102.

Pottie-Sherman, Yolande (2019). "Rust and reinvention: Im/migration and urban change in the American Rust Belt. *Geography Compass* 14(3), pgs. 1 – 13.

NOTE: Project report is due on February 18.

Week 7 (Feb 21-27, 2022) Mid-term recess, NO CLASS

Week 8 – March 1

A report from the field

No readings this week. You will be presenting your Field Report during this class.

Week 9 – March 8

Politics and the media

Hall, Tim (2008). "Contesting the urban renaissance: journalism and the post-industrial city," *Geography* 93(3), pgs. 148 – 157.

Week 10 – March 15

Art and culture

Narula, Seema (2020). "Making Art in a White Town" in *Reclaiming Hamilton* ed. Weinberg, Paul. Hamilton: James Street North Books, pgs. 219 – 232.

Brown, Brian (2017). "Re-Picturing the 'Post-Fordist' Motor City: Commissioned Street Art in Downtown Detroit," *Architecture_MPS* 12(1), pgs. 1 – 23.

Week 11 – March 22

Economic development, gentrification, and community change

Risager, Bjarke Skærlund (2021) “Financialized Gentrification and Class Composition in the Post-Industrial City: A Rent Strike Against a Real Estate Investment Trust in Hamilton, Ontario,” *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 45(2), pgs. 282 – 302.

Doucet, Brian (2020). “Deconstructing Dominant Narratives of Urban Failure and Gentrification in a Racially Unjust City: The Case of Detroit,” *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie* 111(4), pgs. 634 – 651.

Week 12 – March 29

The politics of gender and sexuality

Bailey, Marlon M. (2014). “Engendering space: Ballroom culture and the spatial practice of possibility in Detroit,” *Gender, Place & Culture* 21(4), pgs. 489 – 507.

Bradley, Brian (2021). “‘Trauma is what happens when people spew hate’: LGBTQ community takes city, police to tribunal for failing to protect them during 2019 clash”, *Hamilton Spectator*, June 5, 2021, pgs., A1 & A11.

Week 13 – April 5

Grassroots politics

Fasenfest, David (2015). “Chapter 12 – The Cooperative City: New Visions for Urban Futures,” in *Reinventing Detroit: The Politics of Possibility* eds. Smith, Michael Peter & L. Owen Kirkpatrick. New York: Routledge, pgs. 201 – 218.

Dale, Stephen (2021). “Chapter 5: Slogging towards Tomorrow” in *Shift Change: Scenes from a Post-Industrial Revolution*. Toronto: Between the Lines Books, pgs. 165 – 207.

Week 14 – April 12

The politics of the environment

Boucher, Nancy & Ken Cruikshank (2016) “Chapter 8: Remediating Nature” and “Conclusion” in *The People and the Bay: A Social and Environmental History of Hamilton Harbour*. Vancouver: UBC Press, pgs. 197 – 229.

Course Policies

Submission of Assignments

The Policy Report and Final Essay will be submitted electronically through Avenue to Learn. These assignments will be due at 11:59 PM on the noted due date. The Field Report will be due during class, as it will be presented.

Grades

Grades will be based on the McMaster University grading scale:

MARK	GRADE
90-100	A+
85-90	A
80-84	A-
77-79	B+
73-76	B
70-72	B-
67-69	C+
63-66	C
60-62	C-
57-59	D+
53-56	D
50-52	D-
0-49	F

Late Assignments

Late work will be penalized at 5% a day, including weekends. If you have any issue making a deadline, please let me know beforehand so we can work out an alternate arrangement.

Absences, Missed Work, Illness

McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF): In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar “Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work”.

Courses With An On-Line Element

Some courses may use on-line elements (e.g. e-mail, Avenue to Learn (A2L), LearnLink, web pages, capa, Moodle, ThinkingCap, etc.). Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of a course using these elements, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in a course that uses on-line elements will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

Online Proctoring

Some courses may use online proctoring software for tests and exams. This software may require students to turn on their video camera, present identification, monitor and record their computer activities, and/or lock/restrict their browser or other applications/software during tests or exams. This software may be required to be installed before the test/exam begins.

Authenticity / Plagiarism Detection

Some courses may use a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. For courses using such software, students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via an online learning platform (e.g. A2L, etc.) using plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty.

Students who do not wish their work to be submitted through the plagiarism detection software must inform the Instructor before the assignment is due. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to the plagiarism detection software. **All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld** (e.g., on-line search, other software, etc.). For more details about McMaster's use of Turnitin.com please go to www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

Copyright and Recording

Students are advised that lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor include copyright protected works. The Copyright Act and copyright law protect every original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic work, **including lectures** by University instructors

The recording of lectures, tutorials, or other methods of instruction may occur during a course. Recording may be done by either the instructor for the purpose of authorized distribution, or by a student for the purpose of personal study. Students should be aware that their voice and/or image may be recorded by others during the class. Please speak with the instructor if this is a concern for you.

Academic Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous or Spiritual Observances (RISO)

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the [RISO](#) policy. Students should submit their request to their Faculty Office **normally within 10 working days** of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar's Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

Academic Integrity Statement

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity. **It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty.**

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on

the transcript (notation reads: “Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty”), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the [Academic Integrity Policy](https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-procedures-guidelines/), located at <https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-procedures-guidelines/>

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

- plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which other credit has been obtained.
- improper collaboration in group work.
- copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

Conduct Expectations

As a McMaster student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to demonstrate, respectful and dignified interactions within all of our living, learning and working communities. These expectations are described in the [Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities](#) (the “Code”). All students share the responsibility of maintaining a positive environment for the academic and personal growth of all McMaster community members, **whether in person or online**.

It is essential that students be mindful of their interactions online, as the Code remains in effect in virtual learning environments. The Code applies to any interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University activities. Student disruptions or behaviours that interfere with university functions on online platforms (e.g. use of Avenue 2 Learn, WebEx or Zoom for delivery), will be taken very seriously and will be investigated. Outcomes may include restriction or removal of the involved students’ access to these platforms

Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact [Student Accessibility Services](#) (SAS) at 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or sas@mcmaster.ca to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. For further information, consult McMaster University’s [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#) policy.

Faculty of Social Sciences E-mail Communication Policy

Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student’s own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.

Course Modification

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check his/her McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

Extreme Circumstances

The University reserves the right to change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labour disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, A2L and/or McMaster email.